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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/559,913	12/07/2005	Adrianus W.P.G.G. Vaassen	NL03 0686 US1	9556
65913	7590	10/05/2009		
NXP, B.V. NXP INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY & LICENSING M/S41-SJ 1109 MCKAY DRIVE SAN JOSE, CA 95131			EXAMINER DINH, PAUL	
			ART UNIT 2825	PAPER NUMBER
			NOTIFICATION DATE 10/05/2009	DELIVERY MODE ELECTRONIC

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

ip.department.us@nxp.com

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/559,913

Applicant(s)

VAASSEN, ADRIANUS W.P.G.G.

Examiner

Paul Dinh

Art Unit

2825

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 13 August 2009.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SF/ICE)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

This FINAL office action is a response to the papers filed on 8/13/09.

The remarks are not persuasive; therefore the previous rejections are maintained.

Claims 1-20 are pending.

Specification

The specification is objected to because listing of required elements in the specification are missing, among other things, the following particular elements as examples: "Back Ground of the Invention", "Brief Description of the Drawing", etc, see MPEP § 608.01(b).

The following guidelines illustrate the preferred layout for the specification of a utility application. These guidelines are suggested for the applicant's use.

Arrangement of the Specification

As provided in 37 CFR 1.77(b), the specification of a utility application should include the following sections in order. Each of the lettered items should appear in upper case, without underlining or bold type, as a section heading. If no text follows the section heading, the phrase "Not Applicable" should follow the section heading:

- (a) TITLE OF THE INVENTION.
- (b) CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS.
- (c) STATEMENT REGARDING FEDERALLY SPONSORED RESEARCH OR DEVELOPMENT.
- (d) THE NAMES OF THE PARTIES TO A JOINT RESEARCH AGREEMENT.
- (e) INCORPORATION-BY-REFERENCE OF MATERIAL SUBMITTED ON A COMPACT DISC.
- (f) BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION.
 - (1) Field of the Invention.
 - (2) Description of Related Art including information disclosed under 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98.
- (g) BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION.
- (h) BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SEVERAL VIEWS OF THE DRAWING(S).
- (i) DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION.
- (j) CLAIM OR CLAIMS (commencing on a separate sheet).
- (k) ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE (commencing on a separate sheet).
- (l) SEQUENCE LISTING (See MPEP § 2424 and 37 CFR 1.821-1.825. A "Sequence Listing" is required on paper if the application discloses a nucleotide or amino acid sequence as defined in 37 CFR 1.821(a) and if the required "Sequence Listing" is not submitted as an electronic document on compact disc).

Content of Specification

- (a) Title of the Invention: See 37 CFR 1.72(a) and MPEP § 606. The title of the invention should be placed at the top of the first page of the specification unless the title is provided in an application data sheet. The title of the invention should be brief but technically accurate and descriptive, preferably from two to seven words may not contain more than 500 characters.
- (b) Cross-References to Related Applications: See 37 CFR 1.78 and MPEP § 201.11.
- (c) Statement Regarding Federally Sponsored Research and Development: See MPEP § 310.
- (d) The Names Of The Parties To A Joint Research Agreement: See 37 CFR 1.71(g).
- (e) Incorporation-By-Reference Of Material Submitted On a Compact Disc: The specification is required to include an incorporation-by-reference of electronic documents that are to become part of the permanent United States Patent and Trademark Office records in the file of a patent application. See 37 CFR 1.52(c) and MPEP § 608.05. Computer program listings (37 CFR 1.96(c)), "Sequence Listings" (37 CFR 1.821(c)), and tables having more than 50 pages of text were permitted as electronic documents on compact discs beginning on September 8, 2000.
- (f) Background of the Invention: See MPEP § 608.01(c). The specification should set forth the Background of the Invention in two parts:
 - (1) Field of the Invention: A statement of the field of art to which the invention pertains. This statement may include a paraphrasing of the applicable U.S. patent classification definitions of the subject matter of the claimed invention. This item may also be titled "Technical Field."
 - (2) Description of the Related Art including information disclosed under 37 CFR 1.97 and 37 CFR 1.98: A description of the related art known to the applicant and including, if applicable, references to specific related art and problems involved in the prior art which are solved by the applicant's invention. This item may also be titled "Background Art."
- (g) Brief Summary of the Invention: See MPEP § 608.01(d). A brief summary or general statement of the invention as set forth in 37 CFR 1.73. The summary is separate and distinct from the abstract and is directed toward the invention rather than the disclosure as a whole. The summary may point out the advantages of the invention or how it solves problems previously existent in the prior art (and

preferably indicated in the Background of the Invention). In chemical cases it should point out in general terms the utility of the invention. If possible, the nature and gist of the invention or the inventive concept should be set forth. Objects of the invention should be treated briefly and only to the extent that they contribute to an understanding of the invention.

- (h) Brief Description of the Several Views of the Drawing(s): See MPEP § 608.01(f). A reference to and brief description of the drawing(s) as set forth in 37 CFR 1.74.
- (i) Detailed Description of the Invention: See MPEP § 608.01(g). A description of the preferred embodiment(s) of the invention as required in 37 CFR 1.71. The description should be as short and specific as is necessary to describe the invention adequately and accurately. Where elements or groups of elements, compounds, and processes, which are conventional and generally widely known in the field of the invention described and their exact nature or type is not necessary for an understanding and use of the invention by a person skilled in the art, they should not be described in detail. However, where particularly complicated subject matter is involved or where the elements, compounds, or processes may not be commonly or widely known in the field, the specification should refer to another patent or readily available publication which adequately describes the subject matter.
- (j) Claim or Claims: See 37 CFR 1.75 and MPEP § 608.01(m). The claim or claims must commence on separate sheet or electronic page (37 CFR 1.52(b)(3)). Where a claim sets forth a plurality of elements or steps, each element or step of the claim should be separated by a line indentation. There may be plural indentations to further segregate subcombinations or related steps. See 37 CFR 1.75 and MPEP § 608.01(i)-(p).
- (k) Abstract of the Disclosure: See MPEP § 608.01(f). A brief narrative of the disclosure as a whole in a single paragraph of 150 words or less commencing on a separate sheet following the claims. In an international application which has entered the national stage (37 CFR 1.491(b)), the applicant need not submit an abstract commencing on a separate sheet if an abstract was published with the international application under PCT Article 21. The abstract that appears on the cover page of the pamphlet published by the International Bureau (IB) of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) is the abstract that will be used by the USPTO. See MPEP § 1893.03(c).
- (l) Sequence Listing. See 37 CFR 1.821-1.825 and MPEP §§ 2421-2431. The requirement for a sequence listing applies to all sequences disclosed in a given application, whether the sequences are claimed or not. See MPEP § 2421.02.

Claim Objection

In claims 1 and 14, the limitation “*the power distribution network is configured such that each given circuit element on the IC is arranged with a combined distance equal to a sum of a length of the power bus connected between the power pad and said circuit element, plus a length of the ground bus connected between the ground pad and said circuit element, and each of the combined distances being equal*” as presented, are unclear and incomplete as to how or what in the configuration/arrangement that makes each of the combined distances being equal.

Although the claims are interpreted in light of the specification, limitations from the specification are not read into the claims. See *In re Van Geuns*, 988 F.2d 1181, 26 USPQ2d 1057 (Fed. Cir. 1993).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a), which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections, set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

1. Claims 1-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Seefeldt (US patent 4,978,633) in view of at least one of: Hirakimoto (US pub. 2004/0031007) and Nassif (US pub. 2004/0073881)

Seefeldt discloses in fig. 3:

(Claim 1) An IC having a power distribution network, the power distribution network comprising:

A power bus and a ground bus (73 and 77, respectively) for supplying power from respective power and ground pads (71 and 75) to a plurality of circuit elements (cells 61-65) on the IC; and

Wherein the power distribution network is configured such that each given circuit element on the IC is arranged with a combined distance equal to a sum of a length of the power bus connected between the power pad and said circuit element, plus a length of the ground bus connected between the ground pad and said circuit element, and each of the combined distances being equal.

(Taking cells 61 and 65 in fig. 3 as "each given circuit element" for illustration:

*Cell 61 is arranged such that a distant/path running from power pad 71 to cell 61 (let label short61 since cell 61 is placed closer to power pad 71) and a distant/path running from cell 61 to ground pad 75 (let label long61 since cell 61 is placed far away from ground pad 75);and
Let define: short61 + long61 = combined distance 61*

Cell 65 is arranged such that a distant/path running from ground pad 75 to cell 65 (let label short65 since cell 65 is placed closer to ground pad 75) and a distant/path running from cell 65 to power pad 71 (let label long65 since cell 65 is placed far away from power pad 71);and

Let define: short65 + long65 = combined distance 65.

Thus, according to above interpretation together with the layout in fig 3 shown as proof and evident, combined distance 61 for cell 61 as defined equal combined distance 65 for cell 65 with respect to fig 3. This proves the combined distance for each cells 61-65 to power and ground pads being equal (due to a factor that is considered/interpreted by the examiner as complementary factor based on fig 3 of the prior art), for example, short complemented by long and vice versa, long complemented by short or in other words, a length decreased of power/ground line (conductor/bus) from a power/ground pad complemented by a length increased of ground/power line (conductor/bus) from a ground/power pad, no matter where these cells 61-65 are placed/located in the IC. These features of the prior art correspond to claims 15-16 and fig 3 of the instant Application.

Further explanation as to why the prior art design/IC constitute combined distance for each cells 61-65 to power and ground pads being equal are:

- a. Power pad and ground pad are arranged at diagonally opposite corners of IC and power buses and wires are then routed to cells 61-65 from power/ground pads as shown in prior art fig 3 (that corresponds to fig 3 and claim 3 of the instant application); and*
- b. Complementary factor as explained/interpreted above.*

Thus, Seefeldt discloses substantially all the elements in claim 1 except the decoupling cells in claim 1; however,

Nassif discloses decoupling cells (DECAPs) in fig. 4

Hirakimoto discloses decoupling cells (CAPACITIVE CELLS) in par 118, 141.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to utilize decoupling cells **simply because at least one of the following reasons:**

As disclosed by Nassif: “*using decoupling capacitors to reduce noise in an integrated circuit*” (par 2); “*the use of decap is well-known in the art*” (par 10); and “*utilizes decoupling capacitors in the power grid to reduce power supply induced noise*” (par 13, 31).

As disclosed by Hirakimoto, capacitive cells “*to provide a steady power supply voltage and a negative effect of noise of power supply, ground and the like can be eliminated/prevented*” (par 118, 141).

(Note that the claim limitation “decoupling cell for providing static current” between power and ground is an inherent function of decaps in Nassif reference and an inherent function of capacitive cells in Hirakimoto reference (also an inherent function for any capacitor/decap/cap cells that is used for power decoupling purpose (also called (power) by-passing capacitors)) since capacitors in both Nassif and Hirakimoto are used for decoupling/bypass application and placed between power and ground and connected to power and ground to provide “*a steady power supply voltage*”)

(Claim 2) wherein the combined distances are equal for predominantly all of the circuit elements (cells 61-65 in fig 3 of Seefeldt) in the IC

(Claim 3) wherein the power pad and the ground pad (71 and 75 in fig 3 of Seefeldt) are arranged at diagonally opposite corners of the IC.

(Claim 4) wherein the power distribution network comprises: (see Seefeldt fig 3)

A power bus comprising a vertical section (81 and/or 83) connected to the power pad (71), and one or more horizontal sections (73) connected to the vertical section;

A ground bus comprising a vertical section (82 and/or 84) connected to the ground pad (75) and one or more horizontal sections (77) connected to the vertical section;

wherein the vertical section (81 and/or 83) of the power bus is arranged parallel to the vertical section (82 and/or 84) of the ground bus, such that the one or more horizontal sections of the power bus interleave the one or more horizontal sections of the ground bus (as shown in fig 3) and wherein one of the circuit elements (i.e., cell 61) is connected between horizontal sections of the power bus and ground bus and arranged with said combined distance that is equal to said

combined distance for another one (i.e., cell 65) of the circuit elements that is connected between different horizontal sections of the power bus and ground bus.

(Claim 5) wherein a horizontal section of the power bus and a horizontal section of a ground bus form a row for powering one or more of the circuit elements (fig 3 and related text shown/disclosed row power and ground rail/buses/trunk/grid/wire to power cells 61-65).

(Claim 6) wherein one or more circuit elements (cells 61-65) are located between the horizontal sections of the power bus (73) and the horizontal section of the ground bus (77).

(Claim 7) wherein the decoupling cells (both DECAPs in fig. 4 of Nassif and CAPACITIVE CELLS in par 118, 141 of Hirakimoto) include decoupling capacitors

(Claim 8) wherein the decoupling cells are configured to be the same height as the circuit elements (both fig 4 of Nassif show DECAPs 70 configured to be the same height as the circuit elements (cell 68) and fig 8A-B of Hirakimoto shown CAPACITIVE CELLS configured to be the same height as the circuit elements (macrocells, cells))

(Claim 9) wherein the decoupling cells are arranged between circuit elements on IC (both fig 4 of Nassif show DECAPs 70 are arranged between the circuit elements (cells 68) and fig 8A-B of Hirakimoto shown CAPACITIVE CELLS arranged between the circuit elements (cells, macrocells))

(Claim 10) wherein the power distribution network comprises one or more smaller power distribution networks having the same configuration (Seefeldt fig 3 and corresponding text shows/discloses power/ground pads connected to big power/ground busses and the power/ground busses split to multiple smaller networks with small power/ground conductors/lines/tracks having similar configuration distributing power to cells)

(Claim 11) wherein the power distribution network is configured to maintain the voltage drop between the power pad and each circuit element constant, relative to the voltage drop for predominantly all of the circuit elements in the IC (in Seefeldt fig 3, the symmetrical layout with opposite corner of power and ground pad and symmetrically similar configuration layout of power/ground inherently maintain the voltage drop between the power pad and each circuit element constant)

(Claim 12) wherein the decoupling cells are configured to maintain the voltage drop between the power pad and each circuit element constant, relative to the voltage drop for predominantly all of the circuit elements in the IC (Both: at least par 52 of Nassif and at least the abstract of Hirakimoto disclose this limitation).

(Claim 13) wherein the decoupling cells are configured to selectively couple each of said given circuit elements to maintain combined distance constant among predominantly all of the circuit elements (Fig 4 of Nassif and corresponding text shows and discloses decoupling cells (DECAPs 70) are configured to selectively couple each of said given circuit elements (cells 68) to maintain combined distance constant among predominantly all of the circuit elements. Fig 11 of Hirakimoto also discloses decoupling cells (CAPACITIVE CELLS) are configured to selectively couple each of said given circuit elements (cells, Macrocells) to maintain combined distance constant among predominantly all of the circuit elements).

Claims 14-20 recited similar subject matter and the same rejection applied.

2. Claims 1-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Pryor (US patent 4,612,618) in view of at least one of: Hirakimoto (US pub. 2004/0031007) and Nassif (US pub. 2004/0073881)

Pryor discloses in "PRIOR ART" fig. 3:

(Claim 1) An IC having a power distribution network, the power distribution network comprising:

A power bus (125) and a ground bus (123) for supplying power from respective power and ground pads (*power pad 124P and ground pad 122P, note that fig 3 labeled pads 124P and 122P as V2 and V1, respectively. V2 and V1 are inherently power and ground, respectively or ground and power, respectively to provide power to circuit cells 10 which are logic circuits, logic gates, logic cells. For interpretation, the Examiner considers V1 and V2 as ground and power, respectively*) to a plurality of circuit elements (*cells 10*) on the IC; and

Wherein the power distribution network is configured such that each given circuit element on the IC is arranged with a combined distance equal to a sum of a length of the power bus connected between the power pad and said circuit element, plus a length of the ground bus

connected between the ground pad and said circuit element, and each of the combined distances being equal.

(As shown in "Prior art" fig 3:

Pads 122P and 124P are for V1 and V2 representing ground and power respectively. V1 and V2 connected to ground bus 123 and power bus 125, respectively.

V1 and V2 and bus 123, 125 are then split to horizontal and vertical power trace/stripes/rails/wires and horizontal and vertical ground trace/stripes/rails/wires (22, 24, 122, 124, 122H and 124H) wherein row power and ground buses 22 and 24 extend along each row 140 of cells 10 to supply power to cells 10.

In "PRIOR ART" fig 3 of Pryor, the power layout is symmetrical with power and ground pads (P124P and 122P) are positioned at diagonally opposite corners. "PRIOR ART" fig 3 in reference Pryor corresponds to fig 3 and claim 3 of the Applicant Application

Using similar interpretation/explanation as detailed in reference Seefeldt; it is the symmetrical power layout in fig 3 of Pryor with power and ground pads (P124P and 122P) positioned at diagonally opposite corners and the power routing distribution of trace/stripes/rails/wires (22, 24, 122, 124, 122H and 124H) that provide complementary factor (as explained above) such that each given circuit element (cells 10) on the IC is arranged with a combined distance between the power pad (124P) and said circuit element (cells 10), and between the ground pad (122P) and said circuit element (cells 10), and each of the combined distances being equal)

Thus, Pryor discloses substantially all the elements in claim 1 except the decoupling cells in claim 1; however,

Nassif discloses decoupling cells (DECAPs) in fig. 4

Hirakimoto discloses decoupling cells (CAPACITIVE CELLS) in par 118, 141.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to utilize decoupling cells simply because at least one of the following reasons:

As disclosed by Nassif: "using decoupling capacitors to reduce noise in an integrated circuit" (par 2); "the use of decap is well-known in the art" (par 10); and "utilizes decoupling capacitors in the power grid to reduce power supply induced noise" (par 13, 31).

As disclosed by Hirakimoto, capacitive cells "to provide a steady power supply voltage and a negative effect of noise of power supply, ground and the like can be eliminated/prevented" (par 118, 141).

(Note that the claim limitation "decoupling cell for providing static current" between power and ground is an inherent function of decaps in Nassif reference and an inherent function of capacitive cells in Hirakimoto reference (also an inherent function for any capacitor/decap/cap cells that is used for power decoupling purpose (also called (power) by-passing capacitors)) since

capacitors in both Nassif and Hirakimoto are used for decoupling/bypass application and placed between power and ground and connected to power and ground to provide “a steady power supply voltage”)

(Claim 2) wherein the combined distances are equal for predominantly all of the circuit elements (cells 10 in cell row 140 in fig 3 of Pryor) in the IC

(Claim 3) wherein the power pad and the ground pad (124P and 122P in fig 3 of Pryor) are arranged at diagonally opposite corners of the IC.

(Claim 4) wherein the power distribution network comprises: (see Pryor fig 3)

A power bus comprising a vertical section (124) connected to the power pad (124P), and one or more horizontal sections (22) connected to the vertical section;

A ground bus comprising a vertical section (122) connected to the ground pad (122P) and one or more horizontal sections (24) connected to the vertical section;

wherein the vertical section (124) of the power bus is arranged parallel to the vertical section (122) of the ground bus, such that the one or more horizontal sections of the power bus interleave the one or more horizontal sections of the ground bus (as shown in fig 3) and wherein one of the circuit elements (i.e., cell 10) is connected between horizontal sections of the power bus and ground bus and arranged with said combined distance that is equal to said combined distance for another one (i.e., cell 65) of the circuit elements that is connected between different horizontal sections of the power bus and ground bus.

(Claim 5) wherein a horizontal section of the power bus and a horizontal section of a ground bus form a row for powering one or more of the circuit elements (see Pryor col 4 lines 43-46).

(Claim 6) wherein one or more circuit elements (Pryor cells 10 in fig 3) are located between the horizontal sections of the power bus (125 and/or 24) and the horizontal section of the ground bus (123 and/or 22).

(Claim 7) wherein the decoupling cells include decoupling capacitors (both DECAPs in fig. 4 of Nassif and CAPACITIVE CELLS in par 118, 141 of Hirakimoto include decoupling capacitors)

(Claim 8) wherein the decoupling cells are configured to be the same height as the circuit elements (both fig 4 of Nassif show DECAPs 70 configured to be the same height as the circuit elements (cell 68) and fig 8A-B of Hirakimoto shown CAPACITIVE CELLS configured to be the same height as the circuit elements (macrocells, cells))

(Claim 9) wherein the decoupling cells are arranged between circuit elements on IC (both fig 4 of Nassif show DECAPs 70 are arranged between the circuit elements (cells 68) and fig 8A-B of Hirakimoto shown CAPACITIVE CELLS arranged between the circuit elements (cells, macrocells))

(Claim 10) wherein the power distribution network comprises one or more smaller power distribution networks having the same configuration (Pryor fig 3 and corresponding text shows/discloses power/ground pads (122P, 124P) connected to big power/ground busses and the power/ground busses split to multiple smaller networks with small power/ground conductors/lines/tracks having similar configuration distributing power rows 140 to cells 10)

(Claim 11) wherein the power distribution network is configured to maintain the voltage drop between the power pad and each circuit element constant, relative to the voltage drop for predominantly all of the circuit elements in the IC (in Pryor fig 3, the symmetrical layout with opposite corners of power and ground pads and symmetrically similar configuration layout of power/ground inherently maintain the voltage drop between the power pad and each circuit element constant)

(Claim 12) wherein the decoupling cells are configured to maintain the voltage drop between the power pad and each circuit element constant, relative to the voltage drop for predominantly all of the circuit elements in the IC (Both: at least par 52 of Nassif and at least the abstract of Hirakimoto disclose this limitation).

(Claim 13) wherein the decoupling cells are configured to selectively couple each of said given circuit elements to maintain combined distance constant among predominantly all of the circuit elements (Fig 4 of Nassif and corresponding text shows and discloses decoupling cells (DECAPs 70) are configured to selectively couple each of said given circuit elements (cells 68) to maintain combined distance constant among predominantly all of the circuit elements. Fig 11 of Hirakimoto also discloses decoupling cells (CAPACITIVE CELLS) are configured to

selectively couple each of said given circuit elements (cells, Macrocells) to maintain combined distance constant among predominantly all of the circuit elements).

Claims 14-20 recited similar subject matter and the same rejection applies.

Response to Applicant Remarks

The Applicant argues, regarding both prior art references, that:

- a. None that the prior art teaches the claimed limitation in independent claims including, e.g., that “the combined distance of the lengths of the conductors between the circuit element and the power and ground pads is the same for each of the circuit elements”;
- b. The rejection appears to be based solely on the Office Action's unsupported conclusion/assertion that the combined distances between each of the cells and the pads are equal “due to complementary factor” that is allegedly shown in figure 3 in both prior art references; and both references do not mention “complementary factor”; and
- c. Both prior art references does not state the fig 3 (in both prior art references) is drawn to scale.

Examiner Response

Independent claims 1 and 14 recite the limitation: “*the power distribution network is configured such that each given circuit element on the IC is arranged with a combined distance equal to a sum of a length of the power bus connected between the power pad and said circuit element, plus a length of the ground bus connected between the ground pad and said circuit element, and each of the combined distances being equal*”

For this limitation, it appears that the Applicant relies on the power distribution layout in fig. 3 of the instant Application wherein layout is symmetrical with power and ground pads arranged at diagonally opposite corners of the layout (see claim 3 of the instant application) and circuit elements are positioned within the layout and for each circuit elements in the layout such that, i.e., a short/decreased wire length from the ground/power pad to the circuit element is

complement by a long/increased wire length from the power/ground pad to the circuit element and vice versa (see claims 15-16 of the instant application).

The above mentioned claim limitation is detailed and explained above in the above rejection and further explained below:

Tuning first to prior art reference Pryor (US patent 4,612,618); Pryor discloses in “PRIOR ART” fig. 3 a power distribution layout equivalent to fig. 3 of the Applicant Application.

In fig 3 of Pryor, the power distribution layout is symmetrical with power and ground pads arranged at diagonally opposite corners of the layout (as claimed in claim 3 of the instant application) and circuit elements are positioned within the layout and for each circuit elements (cells 10) in the layout such that, i.e., a short/decreased wire length from the ground/power pad to the circuit element is complement by a long/increased wire length from the power/ground pad to the circuit element and vice versa (as claimed in claims 15-16 of the instant application).

Tuning second to prior art reference Seefeldt (US patent 4,978,633); Seefeldt discloses in fig. 3 a power distribution layout equivalent to fig. 3 of the Applicant Application.

In fig 3 of Seefeldt, the power distribution layout is symmetrical with power and ground pads arranged at diagonally opposite corners of the layout (as claimed in claim 3 of the instant application) and circuit elements are positioned within the layout and for each circuit elements (cells 61-65) in the layout such that, i.e., a short/decreased wire length from the ground/power pad to the circuit element is complement by a long/increased wire length from the power/ground pad to the circuit element and vice versa (as claimed in claims 15-16 of the instant application).

Response to above mentioned items a-c

Regarding item (a): the limitation “the combined distance of the lengths of the conductors between the circuit element and the power and ground pads is the same for each of the circuit elements” is fully detailed and explained in above art rejection.

Regarding item (b):

The Applicant argues that the prior art do not mention complementary factor as asserted by the examiner. The examiners points out that complementary factor is an interpretation/ explanation of the examiner based on fig 3 of the prior art references in the rejection as proof/evident; and

The Applicant argues that the rejection appears to be based solely on the Office Action's unsupported conclusion/assertions that the combined distances between each of the cells and the pads are equal. The examiners points out that the support proof and evident are the drawings, i.e., fig. 3 in the prior art references. The drawings in the prior art are supporting proof and evident and the drawings are part of the disclosure from the prior art.

Regarding item (c): the Applicant argues that both prior art references does not state that fig 3 in (both prior art references) is drawn to scale. The Examiner points out that scaling are irrelevant to the claims. Further more, neither the Applicant claims nor the Applicant disclosure disclose/recite any scaling. The Applicant claims only appears relies on fig. 3 of the Applicant Application and a symmetrical layout with power and ground pads arranged at diagonally opposite corners of the layout (see claim 3 of the instant application) and circuit elements are positioned within the layout and for each circuit elements in the layout such that, i.e., a short/decreased wire length from the ground/power pad to the circuit element is complement by a long/increased wire length from the power/ground pad to the circuit element and vice versa (see claims 15-16 of the instant application). These features are shown in fig 3 of the prior art references and detailed/explained by the Examiner above. To the extent that the Applicant is trying to cover/consider a symmetrical layout in fig 3 of the instant application with power and ground pads arranged at diagonally opposite corners of the layout as a symmetrically scaled drawing, then, i.e., "PRIOR ART" fig. 3 of Pryor and fig. 3 of Seefeldt are also symmetrical with power and ground pads arranged at diagonally opposite corners of the layout, and thus, symmetrically scaled drawings.

In summary, the Applicant relies on a physical power distribution layout, i.e., figure 3 of the Applicant Application to claim a physical feature, i.e., for each circuit elements, combined distant from power and ground pads to the element is equal, then:

The reference Pryor (US patent 4,612,618) discloses in "PRIOR ART" fig. 3, a power distribution layout equivalent to fig. 3 of the Applicant Application, i.e., symmetrical power layout with power and ground pads arranged at diagonally opposite corners of the layout and circuit cells/elements arranged in the layout similar to circuit elements arranged in fig 3 of the Applicant Application, thus, although not explicitly expressed, the physical power distribution layout "PRIOR ART" fig. 3 of Pryor produces the same physical feature that is claimed by the Applicant as fully detailed and explained above; and

Similarly, reference Seefeldt (US patent 4,978,633) also discloses in fig. 3, a power distribution layout equivalent to fig. 3 of the Applicant Application, i.e., symmetrical power layout with power and ground pads arranged at diagonally opposite corners of the layout and circuit cells/elements arranged in the layout similar to circuit elements arranged in fig 3 of the Applicant Application, thus, although not explicitly expressed, the physical power distribution layout fig. 3 of Seefeldt produces the same physical feature that is claimed by the Applicant as fully detailed and explained above.

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Paul Dinh whose telephone number is 571-272-1890. If attempts

to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's Supervisor, Jack Chiang can be reached on 571-272-7483. The fax number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Paul Dinh/

Primary Examiner, Art Unit 2825